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One may express the truth in a different way by saying that Kitchener's character was magnificently rounded; for the greatest practical intelligence is associated, not always, indeed, with a many-sided culture, but most frequently, with an all-round development, with the exercise and growth of all the powers that make up a *man*. Kitchener was certainly not a man cut to formal pattern, no *factus ad unguem homo*, but the range of his sympathies, interests, energies, witnesses that vigor in every part which commonly means strength of the whole personality. He had a special love for engineering and for finance; he had archæological tastes and a particular fondness for old china; he had great diplomatic gifts and a zeal for education; he had a warm feeling for the East, he loved flowers, he was by no means lacking in humor; he was, in his later phase, sociable in a high degree; he was deeply religious. No practical knowledge or problem came amiss to him. "He would immerse himself agreeably in such subjects as the interplay between the Sunnis and Shiah sects or the place of the Sultan of Turkey *vis-à-vis* the Sherif of Mecca as religious hierarch of Islam." His mind was mathematical in its accuracy and definiteness, sane in its ability to allow for non-mathematical factors. It is from a man of this type that we can expect the kind of insight which caused Kitchener at the beginning of the War to plan for an army of seventy divisions, "coolly calculating that its maximum strength would be reached during the third year of the war, just when the enemy would be undergoing a sensible diminution of his resources in man-power."

The message that seems to come out of this book is that what the modern world requires is big men, rather than brilliant men. The lesser minds, in the big affairs, turn out to be not sufficiently well-rounded. One who is altogether military commander, politician, diplomatist, philosopher, or theorist, is not fit, however great his specialized ability, and however keen be his insight within his special province, to be placed in control of large issues. The combined wisdom of a people cannot save it without leadership, and the leader must have the comprehension, though not necessarily the proficiency, of all the specialists whom he employs, besides something else that perhaps none of them possesses.

THE PLAINSMAN AND OTHER POEMS. By Rhys Carpenter. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rhys Carpenter, like the late Francis Thompson—so different from him!—belongs undoubtedly to the classic line of English poets. In fact, Mr. Carpenter is much the more representative of the two. Thompson, clearly a genius, seems to show a certain decadence in the great tradition. Inheritor of the older ideas of beauty in thought and, particularly, in expression, he was carried so far by his peculiar temperament that we can scarcely tell, sometimes, whether he writes great poetry or inspired nonsense. His unrest, at least, is modern, and there is no serenity in him except a religious serenity sometimes forced. Mr. Carpenter, on the other hand, owns no distressing idiosyncrasies, and his appeal is truly impersonal—though to say "imper-

sonal" implies no lack of warmth. He goes back in spirit to the mood of Keats and Shelley, quite passing by the pure emotionalism of Swinburne, the realism and skepticism of Masfield, the decorative artistry of Alfred Noyes.

To say that Mr. Carpenter is "classic" is to imply high compliment; but the compliment is not unambiguous—it requires explanation. Only a rash critic would affirm that the kind of poetry written by Mr. Carpenter is the only kind that is indefeasibly right and good. To be sure, poetry, like everything else, has to develop in evolutionary fashion, and hence there is a general presumption that what is in line with the best work of the past (though not merely reproductive of it) is best. But it will not do to set up such a principle as a rigid criterion of poetic merit. The "Imagists" and the practitioners of "free verse" (*pace* the whole evolutionary idea!) have a right to their own points of view. So have Mr. Masfield and Mr. Noyes.

Just what does one mean, then, by the assertion that Mr. Carpenter's poetry is in a good and rare sense classic? What is the secret of the resemblance to Shelley and Keats, whom we may regard (despite their "romanticism") as classic in comparison with the moderns, using the word *classic* to include what has seemed to the majority of readers as best and truest in the tradition of poetry?

It is not safe to attempt a definition of poetry, for any exact formulation is liable to result in unjustifiable exclusion. A definition that should rule out Pope, Kipling, or even Longfellow, would do more harm than good! And so the attempt to define poetry usually ends either in dogmatism or in simple description. But one may properly venture an opinion as to the natural province of poetry—as to what is most characteristically poetic.

Is not the special business of poetry to express—not merely what is clearly *perceived* or strongly *felt*—but what is *apprehended*? Ideas or feelings that are below, or above, the threshold of distinct consciousness, cry out for expression, and receive an imaginative interpretation. Even a profusion of brilliant and shifting imagery does not destroy the sense of unity and achieved purpose, provided all is used in the service of the apprehended mental state.

Is it not precisely this that explains the *magic* of the greatest lines? Keats' "casements opening on the foam . . ."; Wordsworth's "trailing clouds of glory . . ."; Shakespeare's "We are such stuff as dreams are made of . . ." are not simply "images" or simply truths, though such lines employ imagery and sometimes even use philosophic language. Virgil's "*Sunt lachrymae rerum* . . ." is not merely a stall pessimistic pronouncement, nor a trite observation to the effect that life is rather hard upon us sometimes.

This theory would, if true, provide an explanation other than mere mental indulgence and luxuriousness, for Keats's glorification of fancy, and of Shelley's surrender to imagination. It would give at least a half-meaning to Keats' conviction that truth and beauty are eternally the same. Only by some such conception, it would seem, can we view the poets as something more than entertainers, decorative artists, metrical essayists, or story-tellers, and see that they make

their own special and necessary contribution to the richness and fullness of life.

This digression has seemed necessary in order to make clear the nature of one's liking for Mr. Carpenter's poems, and one's reasons for assigning him a high place among the poets of the day.

Certainly his lines have magic. The first stanza of the poem, "A Plainsman to the Mountains," is sufficient to show that we have to do with a poet whose thought is neither incoherent nor obvious but (in a true psychological sense) "inspired."

You come again, fainter than smoke at morning,
Dim guardians of heaven, shadow-fair;
Like an enchanted isle earth's harbour scorning
You drift upon the ocean of the air.
You are moon-shadow crossed with daylight's gleam;
Faint as blue iris on a summer stream,
You float above my shadows, clear and pale
As the star-ships at sunrise ere they sail
Beyond the daystorm; over misty leas
You rise, unbodied, like the magic trees
Of fairyland where golden throistles perch
And ogres snore by rainbow-guarded springs.

The last three lines, especially, show fancy used as Keats used it.

What does such a poem as this express? Let us not attempt pedantically to formulate its "message." If the poet could tell us in a few simple words just what he means, he would scarcely need to write a poem, and his office would be simply the decoration of truth with fanciful images—in short, "fine writing." If he meant nothing in particular, his office would be to produce beautiful expression for his own sake. But this last can scarcely be in the case of any true poet. People do not tear their hearts out for the sake of beautiful expression or give themselves pain through loyalty to the word as divorced from the idea. If they serve beauty—"that impitiable daemon,"—with self-abnegation, they do so because they feel that it is in some obscure way akin to truth. In the poem of which the first verse has been quoted Mr. Carpenter has apprehended and convincingly expressed the secret of a certain kind of aspiration. It is not wise to carry analysis further.

There is not one of Rhys Carpenter's verses that does not possess in its degree magic and power. The poet's thought is beautifully instinctive and confident; his expression is beautifully artistic and considered. In the service of a genuine and keen apprehension, the taste for beautiful expression through words and metre, ceasing to be merely fastidious or ingenious, does its best work, and the fancy, while free to roam far beyond the commonplace is harnessed to a definite and finely felt motive. As a consequence we have in these poems an apparent union of abandon and restraint, perplexing and dazzling.